

# Platinum Coast Orchid Society

## The Rhizome

### February 2017 Edition



Congratulations to our 2017 officers installed at the Jan. meeting: Director Clive Gay, Vice President Walter Bryant, Treasurer Margaret Croucher, President Jodi Kittleson, Secretary Elaine DeRiso, and Director Mike Ellis

Fellow Members and friends,

I look forward to this new year and serving as your new president. With each new year we have the opportunity to start fresh and make it the best year ever. Our great organization is about our common interest in the study, development, enjoyment and use of orchids.

As a society we are only as good as our members and we are blessed to have a great membership. We cannot succeed without the commitment, dedication and generosity of our members. As we move forward into our show "season" we rely on our membership for their participation to make our "A Festival Of Orchids" our best show yet. If you have any time, or can contribute in any way please let us know. Our next Show meeting will be at 6 p.m., Jan. 31st at the Rockledge Garden Club and our next general meeting is at 7 p.m. on February 8th, also at the Garden Club.

Please keep bringing in your plants and asking questions so we can continue to learn and prosper as orchid growers. I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting - Jodi

#### SAVE THE DATE

**January 31st, 6pm—Show meeting at Cocoa-Rockledge Garden Club.**

**February 8th, 6pm—Board Meeting**

**February 8th, 7pm—Business Meeting. Charlie Scholes will give a short demonstration on virus testing.**

**Cocoa-Rockledge Garden Club**

**DIRECTIONS: Take Fiske Blvd. to St. Andrews Drive. The Garden Club is on the northwest corner of Fiske and St. Andrews. Coming from 520, it is at the third stoplight. Parking is in back.**

#### PCOS SHOW

**Please start thinking about what part you will have in our show. Perhaps this is the year you will be a clerk for the judges. Or work in the Courtesy Booth or at the Ticket Booth. Or try your hand at a niche. Or maybe like many members, you will do all of the above. Why? Because it's a great way to make a difference in our society and to make great connections with other members. A good beginning is to get one sponsor for our show using the sponsor form you will receive at the February meeting.**

*Since so many of us are seeing thrips now, this article by Sue Bottom is especially timely. Sue writes a "For the Novice" section in the monthly magazine, Orchids, which is a benefit of membership in the American Orchid Society.*

## Thrips on Orchids

by Sue Bottom, [sbottom15@bellsouth.net](mailto:sbottom15@bellsouth.net)

I used to laugh when people talked about thrips, saying I don't get thrips. Well, ignorance is bliss. I simply couldn't see the thrips and didn't recognize the thrip damage. Thrips are tiny, slender, winged insects that are usually dark brown or black but can be yellowish white.

This badly damaged cattleya flower has at least eight thrips crawling on it causing the ugly stippling and browned edges on the flower.



**Detection.** If you suspect thrips, you can gently shake a flower over a piece of white paper. The thrip will be a very narrow dark speck about 1/8 inch long moving around on the paper. Some growers hang yellow sticky cards to monitor for flying insects, though I stopped using them after finding dead anoles trapped on the strips. Whether or not you can see the thrip, you can easily recognize the trail of carnage they leave behind.

**Thrip Damage.** Thrips are very small sucking insects that feed on the most tender parts of your orchids: flowers, flower buds, new leaves on thin leaved orchids, root tips, etc.

*Bud Blast on Emerging Inflorescences.* Thrips cause the buds developing on an inflorescence to blast when they break through the cell walls and suck the juices causing the flowers to abort.

*Thrip Damage on Flower Buds.* Thrips feed on emerging flower buds and the infested buds may or may not open. Their piercing mouth parts sucked the juices from the flower so it was ruined long before it even opened.



*Flower Damage.* Flowers may be deformed exhibiting stippling, browned edges and water soaked spots. Flowers may appear to have virus caused color break that is really caused by thrip damage.

*Leaf Damage.* Some thrips feed on the undersides of leaves, particularly on thin leaved orchids like this catasetum. Leaves may appear pitted, stippled, silvery or bleached. The initial damage appears as a small chlorotic spot, but with time a bull's eye will appear inside the chlorotic spot indicating the location where thrip sucked the juices from the plant.



Small brownish specks of excrement may be visible on the undersides of leaves.

*Root Damage.* Thrips love tender new roots like these exposed vanda roots. Roots can be girdled from thrips feeding on the growing root tips.



**Control.** Thrips are the most difficult to control of all the orchid pests. Both the larvae and adults are very active and feed on leaves and flowers. The mature larvae drop onto the bench, underbench or growing medium to pupate. The thrip life cycle (egg to adult) is primarily dependent on temperature. In warm greenhouses thrips may develop from egg to adult in 3 to 4 days in summer and 10 to 14 days in winter, and they can be active throughout the year.



Managing thrips is difficult because they are very small and easy to overlook; they are mobile, spend part of their life cycle in the soil; prefer to feed on flower parts, where systemic insecticides do not reach them; like to hide in flowers, flower buds, and leaf buds making them hard to spot and reach with pesticides; live on a wide variety of host plants; reproduce rapidly in warm greenhouses; may be present in multiple life cycles from egg to adult; hide in plant materials and are resistant to a number of insecticides. Most adult thrips are females that lay eggs into plant tissue, particularly flowers and leaves.

Commercial orchid growers have offered these suggestions:

*Identify Sources.* Identify the source of thrips in your landscape and spray the source plants to prevent the spread of thrips. Thrips are particularly attracted to gardenias, citrus, roses, vegetables and flowering plants.

*Spray Buds and Flowers.* Spray the emerging buds and flowers every three days using a hand pump sprayer and an insecticide that won't mar the flower (like Orthene (acephate), Conserve (spinosad) or Avid (abamectin)).

*Apply Lime Underbenches.* Spreading lime under benches to raise soil pH may make the soil environment inhospitable to thrips that are pupating in the ground.

*Rotate Insecticides.* Apply insecticides with different modes of action. Some rotate Avid (abamectin), Decathlon (Cyfluthrin) and Overture (pyridalyl), others spray with Conserve to kill thrips in the flowers and then an Imidacloprid product for more residual action. The [OHP Thrips Cocktail](#) contains more insecticide rotation guidelines.

The University of Florida, IFAS Extension has some good recommendations (Thrips Management Program for Ornamental Horticulture):

*Sanitation.* Remove weeds, old plant debris, and growing medium from within and around the greenhouse. Eliminate old stock plants as these are a source of thrips and viruses. Removing old flowers may reduce the number of adults and eggs. Place flowers into a sealed bag or container.

*Exclusion.* Screen greenhouse openings such as vents and sidewalls with the appropriate screen size (<0.88 mm) to exclude adult thrips from entering the greenhouse. Airflow may be obstructed with the use of screening containing small pore sizes and as a result the screened surface area must be increased to compensate for this.

*Chemical Control.* No insecticide will provide complete control of thrips. It is important to detect and start management strategies before thrip populations have a chance to increase to moderate or high levels. During warm weather and when populations are high, application intervals of 3 to 5 days may be needed. Rotate chemical classes of insecticides with different modes of activity to reduce the chances of thrips developing resistance. Insecticides should be applied in rotations using one chemical for 2 or 3 applications (pyrethroids only once) and then switching to another class of insecticide with a different mode of activity. The frequency of application may depend on the season and degree of infestation. During winter and early spring, the life cycle is extended compared to spring and summer. This can influence the number of applications needed on a weekly basis.

*Thank you to Sue Bottom for permission to reprint this article for our newsletter. Sue and her husband, Terry, are active in the St. Augustine Orchid Society. Sue maintains the society's website and publishes its monthly newsletter. Check out the STAUG Orchid Society website and the AOS magazine, ORCHIDS, for more of Sue's articles.*

**GREAT PLACES FOR  
MEMBERS TO FIND  
INFORMATION ON  
ORCHIDS:**

1. Programs—Take notes—someday they will make sense.
2. AOS Magazine articles. “Orchids” is available at every meeting for check out.
3. Members— Ask longtime members about orchids, but realize that your yard and potting choices are key. We all use trial and error to succeed.
4. Internet sites—[www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)—This AOS site has the answer to almost any question.
5. Rambles at members’ homes to help you identify the best way to grow your orchids.
6. Visit the PCOS website and reread some of the articles in the newsletters from the past year or two.

PCOS is an affiliate of the **American Orchid Society (AOS)**. There’s an abundance of information on the AOS website. Please visit [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org) for articles, advice on growing orchids, and lots of free information.

Ask Betty Adamson for an application if you’re interested in joining.

For all current members, remember that your renewal notice will arrive in the Orchid Magazine prior to your month of renewal.

[www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)

**UPCOMING FLORIDA SHOWS**

**Feb. 4-5**—Venice Area Orchid Society Show, Venice Community Center, Venice, FL

**Feb. 11-12**—Boca Raton Orchid Society Show, Safe Schools Institute, Boca Raton, FL

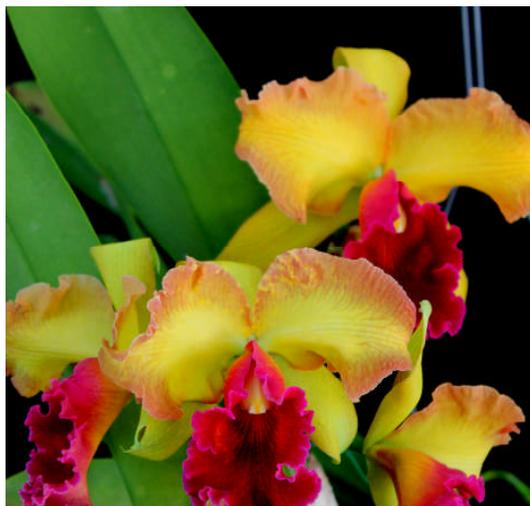
**Feb. 24-26**—Naples Orchid Society Show, Naples Botanical Garden, Naples, FL

**Mar. 3-5**—Martin County Orchid Society Show, Martin County Fairgrounds, Stuart, FL

**Mar. 4-5**—Tampa Bay Orchid Society Show, Egypt Shrine Center, Tampa, FL

**Mar. 18-19**—Jacksonville Orchid Society Show, Garden Club of Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL

**Mar. 24-26**—Gulf Coast Orchid Alliance Show, United Church of Christ, Naples, FL



SUNSHINE

'Best wishes to Peter Pancoast as he recovers from his knee surgery'.

## **2017 PCOS OFFICERS**

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### **DIRECTORS**

**Michael Ellis (2017-2018)**

**Trish Bearse (2017)**

**Clive Gay (2016-2017)**

**Maria Maloney (2017-2018)**

**Dave Colchin (Past President)**

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Margaret Croucher

### **NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Patti Scholes

### **LIBRARY**

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Betty Adamson

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